HISTORY

OF

SCOTLAND.

CHAP. I.

JAMES THE FOURTH,

(Continued.)

1497 - 1513.

CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

England.	*France.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Germany.*	*Popes.*
Henry VII.	Lewis XII.	Ferdinand and Isabella.	John II.	Maximilian.	Alexr. VI. (Borgia)
Henry VIII.			Emanuel.		Pius III.
					Julius II.
					Leo. X.

THE departure of the impostor Perkin Warbeck, from Scotland, was not long after followed by a truce between England and that country. It was evidently the interest both of Henry the Seventh, and of James, to be at peace. The English monarch was unpopular; and every attack by a foreign power endangered the stability of his government, encouraging domestic discontent, and strengthening the hands of his enemies: on the side of the Scottish king there were not similar causes of alarm, for he was strong in the affections of his subjects, and beloved by his nobility; but grave and weighty cares engrossed his attention, and these were of a nature which could be best pur-

sued in a time of peace. The state of the revenue, the commerce and domestic manufactures of his kingdom, and the deficiency of his marine, had now begun to occupy an important place in the thoughts of the still youthful sovereign: the disorganised condition of the more northern portions of his dominions, demanded also the exertion of his utmost vigilance; so that he listened not unwillingly to Henry's proposals of peace, and to the overture for a matrimonial alliance, which was brought forward by the principal Commissioner of England, Fox, bishop of Durham. The pacific disposition of James appears to have been strengthened by the judicious counsels of Pedro D'Ayala, the Spanish envoy at the court of Henry the Seventh: this able foreigner had received orders from his sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, to visit Scotland as the ambassador from their Catholic majesties; and on his arrival in that country, he soon acquired so strong an influence over this prince, that he did not hesitate to nominate him his chief commissioner for the conducting his negociations with England. A seven years' truce was accordingly concluded at Ayton, on the 31st of September, 1497[1], and in a meeting which took place soon after, between William de Warham, Henry's commissioner, and D'Ayala, who appeared on the part of James; it was agreed that this cessation of hostilities should continue during the lives of the two monarchs, and

[1] Rymer, vol. xii. pp. 673, 678 inclusive.

for a year after the death of the survivor. Having accomplished this object, the Spanish minister and his suite left the Scottish court, to the regret of the king, who testified by rich presents the regard he entertained for them.[1]

This negociation with England being concluded, James had leisure to turn his attention to his affairs at home; and although in the depth of winter, with the hardihood which marked his character, he took a progress northward as far as Inverness. It was his object personally to inspect the state of these remote portions of his dominions, that he might be able to legislate for them with greater success than had attended the efforts of his predecessors. The stern and somewhat ungenerous policy which he adopted was, to separate and weaken the clans by arraying them in opposition to each other, to attach to his service by rewards and preferment some of their ablest leaders—to maintain a correspondence with the remotest districts — and gradually to accustom their fierce inhabitants to habits of pacific industry, and a respect for the restraints of the laws. It has been objected to him that his proceedings towards the Highland chiefs were occasionally marked by an unbending rigor, and too slight a regard for justice; but his policy may be vindicated on the ground of necessity, and even of self-defence.

[1] MS. Accounts of the High Treasurer of Scotland under the 31st of October, 1497.

These severe measures, however, were seldom adopted but in cases of rebellion. To the great body of his nobility, James was uniformly indulgent; the lamentable fate of his father convinced him of the folly of attempting to rule without them: he was persuaded that a feudal monarch at war with his nobles, was deprived of the greatest sources of his strength and dignity; and to enable him to direct their efforts to such objects as he had at heart, he endeavoured to gain their affections. Nor was it difficult to effect this: the course of conduct which his own disposition prompted him to pursue, was the best calculated to render him a favorite with the aristocracy. Under the former reign they seldom saw their prince, but lived in gloomy independence at a distance from court, resorting thither only on occasions of state or counsel; and when the parliament was ended, or the emergency had passed away, they returned to their castles full of complaints against a system which made them strangers to their sovereign, and ciphers in the government. Under James all this was changed. Affable in his manners, fond of magnificence, and devoted to pleasure, the king delighted to see himself surrounded by a splendid nobility: he bestowed upon his highest barons those offices in his household which ensured a familiar attendance upon his person: his court was a perpetual scene of revelry and amusement in which the nobles vied with each other in extravagance, and

whilst they impoverished themselves, became more dependent from this circumstance upon the sovereign. The seclusion and inferior splendor of their own castles became gradually irksome to them; as their residence was less frequent, the ties which bound their vassals to their service were loosened, whilst the consequence was favorable to the royal authority.

But amid the splendor of his court, and devotion to his pleasures, James pursued other objects which were truly laudable. Of these the most prominent and the most important was his attention to his navy: the enterprises of the Portuguese, and the discoveries of Columbus, had created a sensation at this period throughout every part of Europe, which, in these times, it is perhaps impossible for us to estimate in its full force. Every monarch ambitious of wealth or of glory, became anxious to share in the triumphs of maritime adventure and discovery. Henry the Seventh of England, although in most cases a cautious and penurious prince, had not hesitated to encourage the celebrated expedition of John Cabot, a Venetian merchant, settled at Bristol; and his unwonted spirit was rewarded by the discovery of the continent of North America. A second voyage conducted by his son Sebastian, one of the ablest navigators of the age, had greatly extended the range of our geographical knowledge; and the genius of the Scottish prince catching fire at the successes of the neighbouring king-

dom, became eager to distinguish itself in a similar career of naval enterprise.

But a fleet was wanting to second these aspirings; and to supply this became his principal object. His first care was wisely directed to those nurseries of seamen, his domestic fisheries, and his foreign commerce. Deficient in any thing deserving the name of a royal navy, Scotland was nevertheless rich in hardy mariners, and enterprising merchants. A former parliament of this reign had adverted to the great wealth still lost to the country from the want of a sufficient number of ships, and busses, or boats, to be employed in the fisheries.[1] An enactment was now made that vessels of twenty tons and upwards should be built in all the seaports of the kingdom, whilst the magistrates were directed to compel all stout vagrants who frequented such districts, to learn the trade of mariners, and labor for their own living.[2]

Amongst his merchants and private traders, the king found some men of ability and experience. Sir Andrew Wood of Largo, the two Bartons, Sir Alexander Mathison, William Merrimonth of Leith, whose skill in maritime affairs had procured him the title of "king of the sea," and various other naval adventurers of inferior note were sought out

[1] Acts of the parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 235. "Anent the greit innumerable riches yat is tint in fault of schippis and buschis."

[2] Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 17.

by James, and treated with peculiar favor and distinction. They were encouraged to extend their voyages, to arm their trading vessels, to purchase foreign ships of war, to import cannon, and to superintend the building of ships of force at home. In these cares the monarch not only took an interest, but studied the subjects with his usual enthusiasm, and personally superintended every detail. He conversed with his mariners — rewarded the most skilful and assiduous by presents—visited familiarly at the houses of his principal merchants and sea officers—practised with his artillery-men — often discharging and pointing the guns, and delighted in embarking on short voyages of experiment, in which, under the tuition of Wood or the Bartons, he became acquainted with the practical parts of navigation. The consequences of such conduct were highly favorable to him: he became as popular with his sailors as he was beloved by his nobility; his fame was carried by them to foreign countries; shipwrights, cannon-founders, and foreign artizans of every description, flocked to his court from France, Italy, and the Low Countries; and if amongst these were some impostors, whose pretensions imposed upon the royal credulity, there were others by whose skill and genius Scotland rose in the scale of knowledge and importance.

But the attention of James to his navy and his foreign commerce, although conspicuous, was not exclusive; his energy and activity in the ad-

ministration of justice, in the suppression of crime, and in the regulation of the police of his dominions, were equally remarkable. Under the feudal government as it then existed in Scotland, the obedience paid to the laws, and the consequent increase of industry and security of property, were dependent in a great degree upon the personal character of the sovereign. Indolence and inactivity in the monarch commonly led to disorder and oppression. The stronger nobles oppressed their weaker neighbours; murder and spoliation of every kind were practised by their vassals; whilst the judges, deprived of the countenance and protection of their prince, either did not dare or did not chuse to punish the delinquents. Personal vigor in the king, was invariably accompanied by a diminution of crime and a respect for the laws; and never was a sovereign more indefatigable than James in visiting with this object every district of his dominions; travelling frequently alone, at night, and in the most inclement seasons to great distances, surprising the judge, when he least expected, by his sudden appearance on the tribunal, and striking terror into the heart of the guilty by the rapidity and certainty of the royal vengeance. Possessed of an athletic frame which was strengthened by a familiarity with all the warlike exercises of the age, the king thought little of throwing himself on his horse, and riding a hundred miles before he drew his bridle; and, on one occasion it is recorded of him, that he rode

unattended from his palace of Stirling in a single day to Elgin, where he permitted himself but a few hours' repose, and then pushed on to the shrine of St. Duthoc in Ross.[1]

Whilst the monarch was occupied in these pacific cares, an event occurred which in its consequences threatened once more to plunge the two countries into war. A party of Scottish youths, some of them highly born, crossed the Tweed at Norham, and trusting to the protection of the truce, visited the castle; but the national antipathy led to a misunderstanding: they were accused of being spies, attacked by orders of the governor, and driven with ignominy and wounds across the river. James's chivalrous sense of honor fired at this outrage, and he dispatched a herald to England, demanding enquiry, and denouncing war if it were refused. It was fortunate, however, that the excited passions of this prince were met by a singular quietude and prudence upon the part of Henry; he represented the event in its true colours, as an unpremeditated and accidental attack, for which he felt regret and was ready to afford redress. Fox, the Bishop of Durham, to whom the castle belonged, made ample submissions, and the King conciliated by his flattery, and convinced by his arguments of the ruinous impolicy of a war, allowed himself to be appeased. Throughout the whole negociations, the wisdom and moderation of Henry presented a striking contrast to the foolish

[1] Lesly's History, Bannat. Edit. p. 76.

and overbearing impetuosity of the Scottish monarch: it was hoped, however, that this headstrong temper would be subdued by his arrival at a maturer age; and in the mean time the English King dispatched to the Scottish Court his Vice-Admiral Rydon, to obtain from James the final ratification of the truce, which was given at Stirling, on the 20th of July, 1499.[1]

In the midst of these threatenings of war which were thus happily averted, it is pleasing to mark the efforts of an enlightened policy for the dissemination of useful learning. By an act of a former parliament, (1496)[2] it had been made imperative on all barons and freeholders under a fine of twenty pounds, to send their sons at the age of nine years to the schools, when they were to be competently founded in Latin, and to remain afterwards three years at the schools of "Art and Jury," so as to ensure their possessing a knowledge of the laws. The object of this statute was to secure the appointment of learned persons to fill the office of sheriffs, that the poorer classes of the people might not be compelled from the ignorance of such judges to appeal to a higher tribunal. These efforts were seconded by the exertions of an eminent and learned prelate, Elphinston, Bishop of Aberdeen, who now completed the building of King's College in that city, for the foundation of which he had procured the papal bull in 1494.

[1] Rymer Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 728.

[2] Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 238.

In the spirit of the age, its original institutions embraced the maintenance of eight priests and seven singing boys; but it supported also professors of Divinity, of the civil and canon law, of medicine and humanity; fourteen students of philosophy and ten bachelors were educated within its walls: nor is it unworthy of record, that its first principal was the noted Hector Boece, the correspondent of Erasmus, and a scholar whose classical attainments and brilliant fancy had already procured for him the distinction of professor of philosophy in Montague College at Paris. Scotland now possessed three universities,—that of St. Andrew's founded in the commencement of the fifteenth century; Glasgow in the year 1453, and Aberdeen in 1500. Nurst amid the security of peace, and encouraged by the example and munificence of the sovereign, the Muses began to raise their heads from the slumber into which they had fallen: the genius of Dunbar and Douglas, emulated in their native language the poetical triumphs of Chaucer and of Gower; and the epic lyre of Henry the Minstrel, recorded in no ignoble strains the story of Wallace and the wrongs of his country.

It was about this time that James concluded a defensive alliance with France and Denmark; and Henry the Seventh who began to be alarmed lest the monarch should be flattered by Lewis the Twelfth into a still more intimate intercourse, renewed his proposals for a marriage with his

daughter. The wise policy of a union between the Scottish King and the Princess Margaret had suggested itself to the councillors of both countries some years before; but the extreme youth of the intended bride, and an indisposition upon the part of James to interrupt by more solemn ties the love which he bore to his mistress Margaret Drummond, the daughter of Lord Drummond, had for a while put an end to all negociations on the subject. His continued attachment, however, the birth of a daughter, and, perhaps, the dread of female influence over the impetuous character of the king, began to alarm his nobility, and James felt disposed to listen to their remonstrances. He accordingly dispatched his commissioners, the Bishop of Glasgow, the Earl of Bothwell, his high admiral, and Andrew Forman, apostolical prothonotary, to meet with those of Henry, and after some interval of debate and negociation the marriage treaty was concluded and signed in the palace at Richmond on the 24th of January, 1502.[1] It was stipulated that as the princess had not yet completed her twelfth year her father should not be obliged to send her to Scotland before the 1st of September 1503, whilst James engaged to espouse her within fifteen days after her arrival.[2] The queen was immediately to be put in possession of all the lands, castles, and manors, whose revenues constituted the jointure of the queen's dowager of Scotland, and

[1] Rymer Fœdera, vol. xii. pp. 776, 777, 787.

[2] Rymer Fœdera, vol. xii. p. 765. It is dated 5th Aug. 1500.

it was stipulated that their annual amount should not be under the sum of two thousand pounds sterling. She was to receive during the life-time of the king, her husband, a pension of five hundred marks, equivalent to one thousand pounds of Scottish money; and, in the event of James's death, was to be permitted to reside at her pleasure, either within or without the limits of Scotland. On the part of Henry, her dowry considering his great wealth, was not munificent. It was fixed at thirty thousand nobles, or ten thousand pounds sterling, to be paid by instalments within three years after the marriage.[1] Besides her Scottish servants, the princess was to be at liberty to keep twenty-four English domestics, men and women, and her household was to be maintained by her husband in a state conformable to her high

[1] As far back as 1281, when silver was far more valuable than in 1502., Alexander the Third gave with his daughter to the King of Norway the value of 9,333 pounds of standard silver, one-half in money for the other half an annuity in lands, valued at ten years purchase, whilst the stipulated jointure was to be ten per cent of her portion. Henry the Seventh, on the other hand, when it might be thought more necessary for him to conciliate the affection of his son-in-law, gives only 5,714 pounds, silver of the same standard, and stipulates for his daughter a jointure of twenty per cent, besides an allowance for her privy purse. [Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, vol. iv. in Appendix Chronological Table of Prices.] The well known economy, however, of the English monarch, and his shrewdness in all money transactions precludes us from drawing any general conclusions from this remarkable fact, as to the comparative wealth of Scotland in the thirteenth, and England in the sixteenth century.

rank as the daughter and consort of a king. It was lastly agreed, that should the queen die without issue before the three years had expired within which her dowry was to be paid, the balance should not be demanded; but in the event of her death, leaving issue, the whole sum was to be exacted.[1] Such was this celebrated treaty in which the advantages were almost exclusively on the side of England, for Henry retained Berwick, and James was contented with a portion smaller than that which had been promised to the Prince of Scotland by Edward the Fourth, when in 1474 this monarch invited him to marry his daughter Cœcilia;[2] but there seems no ground for the insinuation of a modern historian that the deliberations of the Scottish commissioners had been swayed by the gold of England; it is more probable that they avoided a too rigid scrutiny of the treaty, from an anxiety that an alliance which promised to be in every way beneficial to the country and to the sovereign should be carried into effect with as much speed as possible.

The tender age of the young princess, however, still prevented her immediate union with the king, and in the interval a domestic tragedy occurred at court, of which the causes are as dark as the event was deplorable. It has been already noticed that James, whose better qualities were tarnished by

[1] Rymer Fœdera, vol. xii. pp. 787, 792, inclusive.

[2] The portion of Cœcilia was 20,000 marks, equal to 13,333*l.* English money of that age.—Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xi. pp. 825, 836.

an indiscriminate devotion to his pleasures, had, amid other temporary amours, selected as his mistress Lady Margaret Drummond, the daughter of a noble house, which had already given a queen to Scotland. At first little alarm was felt at such a connection; the nobles, in the plurality of the royal favorites, weekly imagined there existed a safeguard for the royal honor, and looked with confidence to James's fulfilling his engagements with England; but his infatuation seemed to increase in proportion as the period for the completion of the marriage approached. His coffers were exhausted to keep up the splendid establishment of his mistress: large sums of money, rich dresses, grants of land to her relations, and needy domestics, all contributed to drain the revenue, whilst her influence must have been alarming. The treaty was yet unconfirmed by the oath of the king, and his wisest councillors began to dread the consequences. It was in this state of things that, when residing at Drummond Castle, the Lady Margaret, along with her sisters, Euphemia and Sybilla, were suddenly seized with an illness which attacked them immediately after a repast, and soon after died in great torture, their last struggles exhibiting, it was said, the symptoms of poison. The bodies of the fair sufferers were instantly carried to Dumblane, and there buried with a precipitancy which increased the suspicion, yet no steps were taken to arrive at the truth by disinterment or examination. It is possible that a slight misunder-

standing between James and Henry concerning the withdrawing the title of King of France, which the Scottish monarch had inadvertently permitted to be given to his intended father-in-law, may have had the effect of exciting the hopes of the Drummonds, and reviving the alarm of the nobles, who adopted this horrid means of removing the subject of their fears; or we may, perhaps, look for a solution of the mystery in the jealousy of a rival house, which shared in the munificence and disputed for the affections of the king.[2]

From the sad reflections which must have clouded his mind on this occasion, the monarch suddenly turned, with his characteristic versatility and energy, to the cares of government.

Some time previous to this (but the precise date is uncertain) he provided the King of Denmark with vessels and troops for the reduction of the Norwegians who had risen against his authority. The Scottish auxiliaries in conjunction with the Danish force, and a squadron furnished by the elector of Brandenbourg, were commanded by Christian Prince Royal of Denmark, and the insurgent Norwegians for the time completely reduced, whilst their chief, Hermold, was taken prisoner and executed. The Scottish ships now returned to Scotland; the artillery and ammunition which formed their freight, carried to the castle of

[1] Rymer Fœdera, vol. xiii. pp. 43, 44.

[2] The Lady Janet Kennedy, daughter of John Lord Kennedy, had borne a son to the king, whom James created Earl of Moray.

Edinburgh, and a mission of Snowdon, herald to the Court of King John, to whom James sent a present of a coat of gold, evinces the friendly alliance which existed between the two countries.[1]

All was now ready for the approaching nuptials of the king. The pope had given his dispensation, and confirmed the treaties; James had renewed his oath for their observation, and the youthful bride, under the care of the Earl of Surrey, and surrounded by a splendid retinue, set out on her journey to Scotland. Besides Surrey and his train, the Earl of Northumberland, Lord Dacre, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Durham, and other civil and ecclesiastical grandees, accompanied the princess, who was now in her fourteenth year, and, at Lamberton Kirk, in Lammermuir, she was met by the Archbishop of Glasgow, the Earl of Morton, and a train of Scottish barons. The royal tents which had been sent forward, were now pitched for her reception; and according to the terms of the treaty, the Earl of Northumberland delivered her with great solemnity to the commissioners of the king. The cavalcade then proceeded towards Dalkeith. When she reached Newbattle, she was met by the prince himself, with all the ardour of a youthful

[1] This expedition of the Scottish ships to Denmark, in 1502-3, is not to be found in Pinkerton. Its occurrence is established beyond doubt by the MS. accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, and by the Historians of Denmark.—Lacombe Histoire de Dannemarc, vol. i. p. 257.

lover, eager to do honor to the lady of his heart. The interview is described by an eye-witness, and presents a curious picture of the manners of the times. Darting, says he, like a hawk on its quarry, James eagerly entered her chamber, and found her playing at cards: he then, after an embrace, entertained her by his performance upon the clarichord and the lute; on taking leave, he sprung upon a beautiful courser without putting his foot in the stirrup, and pushing the animal to the top of his speed, left his train far behind.[1] At the next meeting the princess exhibited her musical skill, whilst the king listened on bended knee, and highly commended the performance. When she left Dalkeith to proceed to the capital, James met her, mounted on a bay horse, trapped with gold; he and the nobles in his train riding at full gallop, and suddenly checking, and throwing their steeds on their haunches, to exhibit the firmness of their seat. A singular chivalrous exhibition now took place—a knight appeared on horseback, attended by a beautiful lady, holding his bridle and carrying his hunting horn. He was assaulted by Sir Patrick Hamilton, who seized the damsel, and a mimic conflict took place, which concluded by the king throwing down his gage and calling "peace." On arriving at the suburbs, the princess descended from her litter, and, mounted upon a pillion behind the royal bridegroom, rode through the streets of

[1] Leland Collectan. vol. iv. p. 284.

the city to the palace, amid the acclamations of her subjects.[1] On the 8th of August, the ceremony of the marriage was performed by the Archbishop of St. Andrew's, in the Abbey Church of Holyrood; and the festivities which followed were still more splendid than those which had preceded it. Feasting, masques, morris dances, and dramatic entertainments, occupied successive nights of revelry. Amid the tournaments which were exhibited, the king appeared in the character of the Savage Knight, surrounded by wild men disguised in goats' skins; and by his uncommon skill in these martial exercises, carried off the prize from all who competed with him. Besides the English nobles, many foreigners of distinction attended the wedding, amongst whom, one of the most illustrious was Anthonie D'Arsie de la Bastie, who fought in the barriers with Lord Hamilton, after they had tilted with grinding spears. Hamilton was nearly related to the king; and so pleased was James with his magnificent retinue and noble appearance in honor of his marriage, that he created him Earl of Arran, on the third day after the ceremony.[2] De la Bastie also was loaded with gifts; the Countess of Surrey, the Archbishop of York,[3] the officers of the queen's household, down to her meanest domestic, experienced the

[1] Leland Collectan. vol. iv. p. 286-7.

[2] Mag. Sigill. xiii. *639. Aug. 11th, 1503.*

[3] Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, sub anno 1503. Aug. 9, 11, 12, 13.

liberality of the monarch, and the revels broke up, amidst enthusiastic aspirations for his happiness, and commendations of his unexampled generosity and gallantry.

Scarce had these scenes of public rejoicing concluded, when a rebellion broke out in the north which demanded the immediate attention of the king. The measures pursued by James in the Highlands and the Isles, had been hitherto followed with complete success. He had visited these remote districts in person; their fierce chiefs had submitted to his power, and in 1495 he had returned to his capital, leading captive the only two delinquents, who offered any serious resistance—Mackenzie of Kintail, and Macintosh, heir to the Captain of Clanhattan. From this period, till the year 1499, in the autumn of which the monarch held his court in South Kentyre, all appears to have remained in tranquillity; but after his return (from what causes cannot be discovered) a complete change took place in the policy of the king, and the wise and moderate measures already adopted were succeeded by proceedings so severe as almost to border on injustice. The charters which had been granted during the last six years to the vassals of the Isles, were summarily revoked. Archibald, Earl of Argyle, was installed in the office of lieutenant, with the ample and invidious power of leasing out the entire lordship of the isles.[1]

[1] The island of Isla, ands the land of north and south Kintyre, were alone excepted.—Gregory's MS. History of the Highlands.

The ancient proprietors and their vassals were violently expelled from their hereditary property; whilst Argyle and other royal favourites appear to have been enriched by new grants of their estates and lordships. We are not to wonder that such harsh proceedings were loudly reprobated; the inhabitants saw, with indignation, their rightful masters exposed to insult and indigence, and at last broke into open rebellion. Donald Dhu, grandson of John, Lord of the Isles, had been shut up for forty years, a solitary captive in the Castle of Inchconnal. His mother was a daughter of the first Earl of Argyle; and although there is no doubt that both he and his father were illegitimate,[1] the affection of the Islemen overlooked the blot in his scutcheon, and fondly turned to him as the true heir of Ross and Innisgail. To reinstate him in his right, and place him upon the throne of the Isles was the object of the present rebellion.[2] A party, led by the Mac Ians of Glenco, broke into his dungeon, liberated him from his captivity, and carried him in safety to the castle of Torquil Macleod in the Lewis, whilst measures were concerted throughout the wide extent of the Isles for the establishment of their independence, and the destruction of the regal power. Although James received early intelligence of the meditated insurrection, and laboured by every method to dissolve the union amongst

[1] Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 247. [2] Ibid.

its confederated chiefs, it now burst forth with destructive fury. Badenoch was wasted with all the ferocity of highland warfare,—Inverness given to the flames; and so widely and rapidly did the contagion of independence spread throughout the Isles, that it demanded the most prompt and decisive measures to arrest it. But James's power, though shook, was too deeply rooted to be thus destroyed. The whole array of the kingdom was called forth. The Earls of Argyle, Huntly, Crawford, and Marshall, with Lord Lovat and other barons, were appointed to lead an army against the Islanders; the castles and strong holds in the hands of the king were fortified and garrisoned; letters were addressed to the various chiefs encouraging the loyal by the rewards which awaited them, whilst over the heads of the wavering or disaffected, were suspended the terrors of forfeiture and execution. But this was not all: a parliament assembled at Edinburgh on the 11th of March, 1503,[1] and in addition to the above vigorous resolutions, the civilization of the Highlands, an object which had engrossed the attention of many a successive council, was again taken into consideration. To accomplish this end, those remote districts, whose inhabitants had hitherto, from their inaccessible position, defied the restraints of the law, were divided into new Sheriffdoms, and placed under the jurisdiction of permanent judges. The preamble of the act complains

[1] Acts of Parl. of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 239, 249.

in strong terms of the gross abuse of justice in the northern and western divisions of the realm,—more especially the Isles; it describes the people as having 'become altogether savage, and provides that the new sheriffs for the North Isles should hold their courts in Inverness and Dingwall, and those for the South, in the Tarbart of Lochkilkerran. The inhabitants of Dowart, Glendowart, and the Lordship of Lorn, who for a long period had violently resisted the jurisdiction of the Justice Ayres or ambulatory legal courts, were commanded to come to the Justice Ayre, at Perth; and the districts of Mawmor and Lochaber, which had insisted on the same exemption, were brought under the jurisdiction of the Justice Ayre of Inverness. The divisions of Bute, Arran, Knapdale, Kintyre, and the larger Cumray were to hold their courts at Ayre, whilst the deplorable condition of Argyle is marked by the words of the act, "that the court is to be held wherever it is found that each highlander and lowlander may come without danger and ask justice," — a problem of no easy discovery. The districts of Ross and Caithness, now separated from the Sheriffdom of Inverness, were placed under their own judges; and it was directed that the inhabitants of these three great divisions of the kingdom should as usual attend the Justice Ayre of Inverness.

It appears, that for the quieting the lowland districts, the king had adopted a system, not uncommon in those times, of engaging the most

powerful of the resident nobles and gentry in a covenant or "band," which, under severe penalties, obliged them to maintain order throughout the country. By such means the blessings of security and good government had been enjoyed by Drumfries-shire, a district hitherto much disturbed; and the Earl of Bothwell now earnestly recommended the like method to be pursued in the reduction of Teviotdale.

In the same parliament, a court of daily council was appointed, the judges of which were to be selected by the king, and to hold their sittings in Edinburgh. The object of this new institution was to relieve the lords of the "Session" of the confusion and pressure of business, which had arisen from the great accumulation of cases, and to afford immediate redress to those poorer litigants whose matters had been delayed from year to year. The ferocity of feudal manners, and the gradual introduction of legal subtilties are strikingly blended in another law passed at this time, by which it was directed, that no remissions or pardons were hereafter to contain a general clause for all offences, as it was found, that by this form, much abuse of justice had been introduced. A ferocious ruffian, for example, who, to the crime of murder, had, as was generally the case, added many inferior offences, in purchasing his remission, was in the practice of stating the minor delinquency, and afterwards pleading that the murder was included under the pardon. It was now made imperative, that before any remission was granted,

the highest offence should be ascertained, and minutely described in the special clause; it being permitted to the offender to plead his remission for all crimes of a minor description. The usual interdiction was repeated against all export of money forth of the realm; forty shillings being fixed as the maximum, which any person might carry out of the country. The collection of the royal customs was more strictly ensured: it was enjoined, that the magistrates of all burghs should be annually changed; that no Scottish merchants should carry on a litigation beyond seas, in any court but that of the Conservator, who was to be assisted by a council of six of the most able merchants, and was commanded to visit Scotland once every year. The burghs of the realm were amply secured in the possession of their ancient privileges, and warning was given to their commissaries or head-men, that when any tax was to be proposed, or contribution granted by the parliament, they should be careful to attend and give their advice in that matter as one of the three estates of the realm; a provision demonstrating the obsoleteness of some of the former laws upon this subject, and proving that an attendance upon the great council of the kingdom was still considered a grievance by the more laborious classes of the community. With regard to the higher landed proprietors, they were strongly enjoined to take seisin, and enter upon the superiority of their lands, so that the vassals who held under them

might not be injured by their neglect of this important legal solemnity; whilst every judge, who, upon a precept from the Chancery, had given seisin to any baron, was directed to keep an attested register of such proceeding in a court-book, to be lodged in the Exchequer.

It appears by a provision of the same parliament, that "the Green Wood of Scotland" was then utterly destroyed: a remarkable change from the picture which has been formerly given in this work of the extensive forests, which once covered the face of the country. To remedy this, the fine for the felling or burning of growing timber was raised to five pounds, whilst it was ordered that every lord, or laird, in those districts where there were no great woods or forests, should plant at the least one acre, and attempt to introduce a farther improvement, by enclosing a park for deer, whilst he attended also to his warrens, orchards, hedges, and dovecots. All park-breakers and trespassers within the enclosures of a landholder, were to be fined in the sum of ten pounds; and if the delinquency should be committed by a child, he was to be delivered by his parents to the judge, who was enjoined to administer corporal correction in proportion to its enormity. In the quaint language of the act, "the bairn is be lashed, scourged, and dung, according to the fault." All vassals, although it was a time of peace, were commanded to have their arms and harness in good order, to be inspected at the annual military musters or

weapon schawings. By an act passed in the year 1457, it had been recommended to the king, lords, and prelates, to let their lands in "few farm;" but this injunction which, when followed, was highly beneficial to the country, had fallen so much into disuse, that its legality was disputed: it loosened the strict ties of the feudal system, by permitting the farmers and labourers to exchange their military services for the payment of a land rent; and although it promoted agricultural improvement, it was probably opposed by a large body of the barons, who were jealous of any infringement upon their privileges. The benefits of the system, however, were now once more recognised. It was declared lawful for the sovereign, his prelates, nobles, and landholders, to "set their lands in few," under any condition which they might judge expedient; taking care, however, that by such leases the annual income of their estates should not be diminished to the prejudice of their successors. No creditor was to be permitted to seize for debt, or to order the sale of, any instruments of agriculture; an equalization of weights and measures was commanded to be observed throughout the realm; it was ordained that the most remote districts of the country, including the Isles, should be amenable to the same laws as the rest of the kingdom; severe regulations were passed for an examination into the proper qualifications of notaries; and an attempt was made to reduce the heavy expenses of litigation, and for the

suppression of strong and idle paupers. The parliament concluded by introducing a law which materially affected its own constitution. All barons or freeholders, whose annual revenue was below the sum of one hundred marks of the new extent established in 1424, were permitted to absent themselves from the meeting of the three estates, provided they sent their procurators to answer for them, whilst all whose income was above that sum were under the usual fine to be compelled to attend.[1]

Such were the most remarkable provisions of this important meeting of the three estates; but in these times the difficulty did not so much consist in the making of good laws, as in the carrying them into execution. This was particularly experienced in the case of the Isles, where the rebellion still raged with so much violence, that it was found necessary to dispatch a small naval squadron under Sir Andrew Wood and Robert Barton, two of the most skilful officers in the country, to co-operate with the land army, which was commanded by the Earl of Arran, lieutenant-general of the king.[2] James, who at present meditated an expedition in person against the broken clans of Eskdale and Teviotdale, could not accompany his fleet farther than Dumbarton.[3] The facility with which Wood and

[1] Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 240—254.

[2] Treasurer's Accounts, 1504, March 14.

[3] Ibid. sub anno 1504; April 18, 30; May 6, 9, 10, and 11.

Barton reduced the strong insular Castle of Carneburgh, which had attempted to stand a siege, and compelled the insurgent chiefs to abandon their attempts at resistance, convinced him, that in his attention to his navy, he had not too highly estimated its importance. Aware also of the uncommon energy with which the monarch directed his military and naval resources, and witnessing the rapidity with which delinquents were overtaken by the royal vengeance, Macleod, Makane, and others of the most powerful of the island lords, adopted the wiser policy of supporting the crown, being rewarded for their fidelity by sharing in the forfeited estates of the rebels.[1]

A temporary tranquillity having been thus established in the north, the king proceeded at the head of a force which overawed all opposition into Eskdale. Information was sent to the English monarch, requesting him to co-operate in this attempt to reduce the warlike borderers, whose habits of plunder were prejudicial to the security of either country; and Lord Dacre the warden, received his master's instructions to meet the Scottish king and afford him every assistance. He repaired accordingly to James's head quarters at Lochmaben, and proceedings against the freebooters of these districts were commenced with the utmost vigour and severity. None, however,

[1] Treasurer's Accounts, 1504, May 7—11.

knew better than James how to combine amusement with the weightier cares of government. He was attended in his progress by his huntsmen, falconers, morris dancers, and all the motley and various minions of his pleasures, as well as by his judges and ministers of the law; and whilst troops of the unfortunate marauders were seized and brought in irons to the encampment, executions and entertainments appear to have succeeded each other with extraordinary rapidity.[1] The severity of the monarch to all who had disturbed the peace of the country was as remarkable as his kindness and affability to the lowest of his subjects who respected the laws; and many of the ferocious borderers, to whom the love of plunder had become a second nature, but who promised themselves immunity because they robbed within the English pale, lamented on the scaffold the folly of such anticipation. The Armstrongs, however, appear at this time to have made their peace with the crown,[2] whilst the Jardines, and probably other powerful septs purchased a freedom from minute inquiry, by an active co-operation with the measures of the sovereign.

On his return from the "Raid of Eskdale" to Stirling, James scarcely permitted himself a month's repose, which was occupied in attention to the

[1] Treasurer's Accounts, August 9, 1504; also under August 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, and 31. For the particulars, see the Entries on this Expedition.

[2] Ibid. 1504, September 2.

state of his fleet, and in negociation by mutual messengers with the Lord Aubigny in France, when he judged it necessary to make a progress across the Mount as far as Forres; visiting Scone, Forfar, Aberdeen, and Elgin, enquiring into the state of this part of his dominions, scrutinizing the conduct of his sheriffs and magistrates, and declaring his readiness to redress every grievance, were it sustained by the poorest tenant or labourer in his dominions.[1] Soon after his return he received the unpleasant intelligence that disturbances had again broken out in the Isles, which would require immediate interference. In 1504, great efforts had been made, but with little permanent success, and the progress of the insurrection became alarming. Macvicar, an envoy from Macleod, who was then in strict alliance with the king, remained three weeks at court: Makane also had sent his emissaries to explain the perilous condition of the country; and, with his characteristic energy, the king, as soon as the state of the year permitted, dispatched the Earl of Huntly to invade the Isles by the north, whilst himself in person led an army against them from the south; and John Barton proceeded with a fleet to reduce and overawe these savage districts.[2] The terror of the royal name; the generosity with which James rewarded his adherents; and the vigorous measures which he adopted against the disaffected, produced

[1] Treasurer's Accounts, 1504, sub mense Oct.—See also Sept. 26.
[2] Ibid. 1505, Sept. 6.

a speedy and extensive effect in dissolving the confederacy. Maclean of Dowart, Macquarrie of Ulva, with the chiefs of Barra and Macinnon, offered their submission, and were received into favour; and the succeeding year (1506) witnessed the utter destruction of Torquil Macleod, the great head of the rebellion, whose Castle of Stornaway in Lewis was stormed by Huntly, whilst Donald Dhu, the captive upon whose aged head his vassals had made this desperate attempt to place the crown of the Isles, escaping the gripe of the conqueror, fled to Ireland, where he soon after died.[1]

It was now proper for the monarch to look to his foreign relations, to seize the interval of peace at home, that he might strengthen his ties with the continent. France, the ally of Scotland, had been too constantly occupied with hostilities in Italy, to take an interest in preventing the negociations for the marriage of the king to the princess of England. The conquest of the Milanese by the arms of Lewis the Twelfth, in which Robert Stuart, Lord of Aubigny, had distinguished himself, and the events which suc-

[1] Nor whilst the Bartons, by their naval skill secured the integrity of the kingdom at home, did the monarch neglect their interests abroad. Some of their ships, which had been cruising against the English in 1497, had been seized and plundered on the coast of Britanny, and a remonstrance was addressed to Lewis the Twelfth, by Panter, the royal secretary, which complained of the injustice, and insisted on redress. [*Epistolæ Regum Scotorum*, vol. i. pp. 17, 18.]

succeeded, in the partition of the kingdom of Naples, between the Kings of France and Castile, concentrated the attention of both monarchs upon Italy, and rendered their intercourse with Britain less frequent. But when the quarrel regarding the division of the kingdom of Naples broke out between Ferdinand and Lewis, in 1503, and the defeats of Seminara and Cerignola, had established the superiority of the Spanish arms in Italy, negociations between Lewis and the Scottish Court, appear to have been renewed. The causes of this were obvious. Henry the Seventh of England esteemed none of his foreign alliances so highly as that with Spain: his eldest son, Arthur, had espoused Catharine the Infanta; and, on the death of her husband, a dispensation had been procured from the Pope for her marriage with his brother Henry, now Prince of Wales. It was evident to Lewis, that his rupture with Spain was not unlikely to bring on a quarrel with England, and it became therefore of consequence to renew his negociations with James the Fourth.

These, however, were not the only foreign cares which attracted the attention of the king. In the autumn of the year 1505, Charles D'Egmont, Duke of Gueldres, a prince of spirit and ability, who with difficulty maintained his dominions against the unjust attacks of the Emperor Maximilian, dispatched his secretary on an embassy to the Scottish monarch, requesting his interference

and support.[1] Nor was this denied him. The duke had listened to the advice of the Scottish prince when he requested him to withdraw his intended aid from the unfortunate Edmund de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, the representative of the House of York, who had sought a refuge at his court; and James now anxiously exerted himself in his behalf. He treated his envoy with distinction; dispatched an embassy to the duke, which, in passing through France, secured the assistance of Lewis the Twelfth, and so effectually remonstrated with Henry the Seventh and the Emperor Maximilian, that all active designs against the duchy of Gueldres were for the present abandoned.[2]

In the midst of these transactions, and whilst the presence of Huntly, Barton, and the Scottish fleet was still necessary in the Isles, the more pacific parts of the country were filled with joy by the birth of a prince, which took place at Holyrood on the 10th of February, 1506. None could testify greater satisfaction at this event than the monarch himself.[3] He instantly dispatched messengers to carry the news to the Kings of England, France, Spain, and Portugal; and, on the 23d of February, the baptism was held with mag-

[1] Accounts of the High Treasurer, 1505, Sept. 6.

[2] Ibid. 1506, July 6 and 8.—Epistolæ Reg. Scot. I. p. 21, 30, 34.

[3] To the lady of the queen's chamber, who brought him the first intelligence, he presented a hundred gold pieces and a cup of silver.

nificence in the chapel of Holyrood. The boy was named James, after his father; but the sanguine hopes of the kingdom were, within a year, clouded by his premature death.

At this conjuncture an embassy from Pope Julius the Second arrived at the court of Scotland. Alarmed at the increasing power of the French in Italy, this pontiff had united his strength with that of the Emperor Maximilian and the Venetians, to check the arms of Lewis, whilst he now attempted to induce the Scottish monarch to desert his ancient ally. The endeavour, however, proved fruitless. James, indeed, reverently received the papal ambassador, gratefully accepted the consecrated hat and sword which he presented, and loaded him and his suite with presents; he communicated also the intelligence which he had lately received from the King of Denmark, that his ally, the Czar of Muscovy, had intimated a desire to be received into the bosom of the Latin church; but he detected the political finesse of the warlike Julius, and remained steady to his alliance with France. Nay, scarcely had the ambassador left his court, when he proposed to send Lewis a body of four thousand auxiliaries to serve in his Italian wars, an offer which the rapid successes of that monarch enabled him to decline.

Turning his attention from the continent to his affairs at home, the king recognised with satisfaction the effects of his exertions, in enforcing, by severity and indefatigable personal superinten-

dence, a universal respect for the laws. The husbandman laboured his lands in security, the merchant traversed the country with his goods, the foreign trader visited the markets of the various burghs and sea-ports fearless of plunder or interruption; and so convinced was the monarch of the success of his efforts, that, with a whimsical enthusiasm, he determined to put it to a singular test. Setting out on horseback, unaccompanied even by a groom, with nothing but his riding cloak cast about him, his hunting knife at his belt, and six-and-twenty pounds for his travelling expences in his purse, he rode, in a single day, from Stirling, across the Mount, through Perth and Aberdeen to Elgin; whence, after a few hours' repose, he pushed on to the shrine of St. Duthoc, in Ross, where he heard mass. In this feat of bold and solitary activity, the unknown monarch met not a moment's interruption; and after having boasted, with an excusable pride, of the tranquillity to which he had reduced his dominions, he returned in a splendid progress to his palace at Stirling, accompanied by the principal nobles and gentry of the districts through which he passed.

Soon after he dispatched the Archbishop of St. Andrew's and the Earl of Arran to the court of France, for the purpose of procuring certain privileges regarding the mercantile intercourse between the two countries, and to fix upon the line of policy which appeared best for their mutual

interest regarding the complicated affairs of Italy. In that country an important change had taken place. The brilliant successes of the Venetians against the arms of Maximilian had alarmed the jealousy of Lewis, and led to an inactivity on his part, which terminated in a total rupture; whilst the peace concluded between the Emperor and James's ally and relative, the Duke of Gueldres, formed, as is well known, the basis of the league of Cambrai, which united, against the single republic of Venice, the apparently irresistible forces of the Pope, the Emperor, and the kings of France and Spain. For the purpose, no doubt, of inducing the king to become a party to this powerful coalition, Lewis now sent the veteran Aubigny to the Scottish court, with the President of Toulouse;[1] and the monarch, who loved the ambassador for his extraction, and venerated his celebrity in arms, received him with distinction. Tournaments were held in honour of his arrival; he was placed by the king in the highest seat at his own table, appealed to as supreme judge in the lists, and addressed by the title of Father of War. This eminent person had visited Scotland twenty-five years before, as ambassador from Charles the Eighth to James the Third; and

[1] "Vicesima prima Martii antedicti, Galliæ oratores, D^nus^ videlicet D'Aubeny et alter, supplicationum regiæ domus Magister, octoginta equis egregie comitati, urbem ingressi sunt, Scotiam petituri."—Narratio Hist. de gestis Henrici vii per Bernardum Andream Tholosatem. Cotton. MSS. Julius A. III.

it was under his auspices that the league between the two countries was then solemnly renewed. He now returned to the land which contained the ashes of his ancestors, full of years and of honor; but it was only to mingle his dust with theirs, for he sickened almost immediately after his arrival, and died at Corstorphine.[1]

Another object of Lewis in this embassy was to consult with James regarding the marriage of his eldest daughter, to whom Charles, King of Castile, then only eight years old, had been proposed as a husband. Her hand was also sought by Francis of Valois, Dauphin of Vienne; and the French monarch declared that he could not decide on so important a question without the advice of his allies, of whom he considered Scotland both the oldest and the most friendly. To this James replied, that since his brother of France had honoured him by asking his advice, he would give it frankly as his opinion, that the princess ought to marry within her own realm of France, and connect herself rather with him who was to succeed to the crown than with any foreign potentate; this latter being a union out of which some colourable or pretended claim might afterwards be raised against the integrity and independence of his kingdom. The advice was satisfactory, for it coincided with the course which Lewis had already determined to follow.

[1] Lesly's History, Bann. Ed. p. 77.

Happy in the affections of his subjects, and gratified by observing an evident increase in the wealth and industry of the kingdom, the king found leisure to relax from the severer cares of government, and to gratify the inhabitants of the capital by one of those exhibitions of which he was fond even to weakness. A magnificent tournament was held at Edinburgh, in which the monarch enacted the part of the Wild Knight, attended by a troop of ferocious companions disguised as savages; Sir Anthony D'Arsie and many of the French nobles who had formed the suite of Aubigny, were still at court, and bore their part in the pageant of Arthur and his Peers of the Round Table, whilst the prince attracted admiration by the uncommon skill which he exhibited, and the rich gifts he bestowed; but the profuse repetition of such expensive entertainments soon reduced him to great difficulties.

The constant negociation and intimacy between France and the Scottish court appear at this time to have roused the jealousy of Henry the Seventh. It required, indeed, no great acuteness in this cautious prince to anticipate the probable dissolution of the League of Cambrai, in which event he perhaps anticipated a revival of the ancient enmity of France, and the possible hostility of James. His suspicion was indicated by the seizure of the Earl of Arran and his brother, Sir Patrick Hamilton, who had passed through England to the court of Lewis, without the knowledge of Henry, and

were now on their return. In Kent they were met by Vaughan, an emissary of England; and, on their refusal to take an oath which bound them to the observation of peace with that country, they were detained and committed to custody. To explain and justify his conduct, Henry dispatched Dr. West on a mission to the king, who resented the imprisonment of his subjects, and declared that they had only fulfilled their duty in refusing the oath. He declined a proposal made for a personal interview with his royal father-in-law, insisted on the liberation of Arran, and on these conditions agreed to delay, for the present, any renewal of the league with France. The imprisoned nobles, however, were not immediately dismissed; and, probably, in consequence of the delay, James considered himself relieved from his promise.

The death of the English king occurred not long after, an event which was unquestionably unfortunate for Scotland. His caution, command of temper, and earnest desire of peace, were excellent checks to the inconsiderate impetuosity of his son-in-law; nor, if we except, perhaps, the last-mentioned circumstance of the detention of Arran, can he be accused of a single act of injustice towards that kingdom, so long the enemy of England. The accession of Henry the Eighth, on the other hand, although not productive of any immediate ill effects, drew after it, within no very distant period, a train of events injurious in their progress, and most calamitous in their issue. At first, indeed,

all looked propitious and peaceful. The Scottish king sent his ambassador to congratulate his brother-in-law of England on his accession to the throne;[1] and the youthful monarch, in the plenitude of his joy on this occasion, professed the most anxious wishes for the continuance of that amity between the kingdoms which had been so sedulously cultivated by his father. The existing treaties were confirmed, and the two sovereigns interchanged their oaths for their observance;[2] nor, although so nearly allied to Spain by his marriage, did Henry seem at first to share in the jealousy of France which was entertained by that power; on the contrary, even after the battle of Agnadillo had extinguished the hopes of the Venetians, he did not hesitate to conclude a treaty of alliance with Lewis the Twelfth. All these fair prospects of peace, however, were soon destined to be overclouded by the pride and impetuosity of a temper which hurried him into unjust and unprofitable wars.

In the meantime Scotland, under the energetic government of James, continued to increase in wealth and consequence: her navy, that great arm of national strength, had become not only respectable, but powerful: no method of encouragement had been neglected by the king; and the success of his efforts was shown by

[1] Rotuli Scotiæ, vol. ii. p. 572.

[2] Rymer Fœdera, vol. xiii. pp. 261, 262.

the fact that, the largest ship of war then known in the world, was constructed and launched within his dominions. This vessel, which was named the Great Michael, appears to have been many years in building, and the king personally superintended the work with much perseverance and enthusiasm.[1] The family of the Bartons, which for two generations had been prolific of naval commanders, were entrusted by this monarch with the principal authority in all maritime and commercial matters: they purchased vessels for him on the continent, they invited into his kingdom the most skilful foreign shipwrights; they sold some of their own ships to the king, and vindicated the honour of their flag whenever it was insulted, with a readiness and severity of retaliation which inspired respect and terror. The Hollanders had attacked a small fleet of Scottish merchantmen; plundering the cargoes, murdering the crews, and throwing the bodies into

[1] Her length was two hundred and forty feet, her breadth fifty-six to the water's edge, but only thirty-six within; her sides, which were ten feet in thickness, were proof against shot. In these days ships carried guns only on the upper deck, and the Great Michael, notwithstanding these gigantic dimensions, could boast of no more than thirty-five; sixteen on each side, two in the stern, and one in the bow. She was provided, however, with three hundred small artillery, under the names of myaud, culverins, and double dogs; whilst her complement was three hundred seamen, besides officers, a hundred and twenty gunners, and a thousand soldiers [M'Pherson's Annals of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 42.]. The minuteness of these details, which are extracted from authentic documents, may be pardoned upon a subject so important as the navy.

the sea. The affair was probably piratical, for it was followed by no diplomatic remonstrance; but an exemplary vengeance followed the offence. Andrew Barton was instantly dispatched with a squadron, which captured many of the pirates, and, in the cruel spirit of the times, the admiral commanded the hogsheads which were stowed in the hold of his vessels to be filled with the heads of the prisoners, and sent as a present to his royal master.[1]

So far back as 1476, in consequence of the Bartons having been plundered by a Portuguese squadron, letters of reprisal were granted them, under the protection of which, there seems reason to believe that they more than indemnified themselves for their losses. The Portuguese, whose navy and commerce were at this time the richest and most powerful in the world, retaliated; and, in 1507, the Lion, commanded by John Barton, was seized at Campvere, in Zealand, and its commander thrown into prison. The sons of this officer, however, having procured from James a renewal of their letters of reprisal, fitted out a squadron, which intercepted and captured at various times many richly-laden carracks returning from the Portuguese settlements in India and Africa; and the unwonted apparition of blackamoors at the Scottish court, and sable empresses presiding over the royal

[1] Lesly's Hist. Bann. Ed. p. 74.

tournaments, is to be traced to the spirit and success of the Scottish privateers.

The consequence of this earnest attention to his fleet was the securing an unusual degree of tranquillity at home. The Islanders were kept down by a few ships of war more effectually than by an army; and James acquired at the same time an increasing authority amongst his continental allies. By his navy he had been able to give assistance on more than one occasion to his relative the King of Denmark. In 1509, he made a present of two large vessels completely accoutred for war to Lewis the Twelfth[1]; and while the navy of England was still in its infancy, that of the sister country had risen, under the judicious care of the monarch, to a respectable rank, although far inferior to the armaments of the leading navigators of Europe, the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the Venetians.

It was at this period, that the memorable invention of printing,—that art which has changed, perhaps, more than any other human discovery, the conditions and the prospect of the world,—found its way into Scotland, under the auspices of Walter Chapman, a servant of the king's household.[2] Two years before, the skill and ingenuity of Chapman appear to have attracted the notice of his royal

[1] Lesly, p. 353.

[2] He printed in the year 1508, a small volume of pamphlets, and soon after the "Breviary of Aberdeen."

master; and as James was a friend to letters, and an ardent enthusiast in every new invention, we may believe, that he could not view this astonishing art with indifference. We know that he purchased books from the typographer; and that a royal patent to exercise his mystery was granted to the artist; the original of which still exists amongst our national records. The art, as is well known, had been imported into England by Caxton as early as the year 1474. Yet more than thirty years elapsed before it penetrated into Scotland,—a tardiness to be partly accounted for by the strong principle of concealment and monopoly.

Amidst all these useful cares, the character of the monarch, which could no longer plead for its excuse the levity or thoughtlessness of youth, exhibited many inconsistencies. He loved his youthful queen with much apparent tenderness, yet he was unable to renounce that indiscriminate admiration of beauty, and devotion to pleasure, which, in defiance of public decency and moral restraint, sought its gratification equally amongst the highest and lowest ranks of society. He loved his people, and would, in the ardent generosity of his disposition, have suffered any personal privation to have saved the meanest of his subjects from distress; but his thoughtless prodigality to every species of empiric, to jesters, dancers, and the lowest retainers about his court, with his devotion to gambling, impoverished his Exchequer, and

drove him in his distresses to expedients, which his better reason lamented and abandoned. Large sums of money also were expended in the idle pursuits of alchemy, and the equally vain and expensive endeavours for the discovery of gold mines in Scotland: often, too, in the midst of his labours, his pleasures, and his fantastic projects, the monarch was suddenly seized with a fit of ascetic superstition, at which times he would shut himself up for many days with his confessor, resolve on an expedition to Jerusalem, or take a solitary pilgrimage on foot to some favorite shrine, where he wept over his sins, and made resolutions of amendment, which, on his return to the world, were instantly forgotten. Yet all this contradiction and thoughtlessness of mind was accompanied by so much kindliness, accessibility, and warm and generous feeling, that the people forgot or pardoned it in a prince, who, on every occasion, showed himself their friend.

It was now two years since the accession of Henry the Eighth to the crown; and the aspect of affairs in England began to be alarming. The youthful ambition of the English king had become dazzled with the idle vision of the conquest of France; he already pondered on the dangerous project of imitating the career of Edward the Third and Henry the Fifth; whilst such was the affection of James for his ally, that any enterprise for the subjugation of that kingdom was almost certain to draw after it a declaration of

war against the aggressor. Nor were there wanting artful and insidious friends, who, to accomplish their own ends, endeavoured to direct the arms of Henry against Lewis. Pope Julius the Second, and Ferdinand of Spain, having gained the object they had in view by the league of Cambrai, had seceded from that coalition, and were now anxious to check the successes of the French in Italy. The pontiff, with the violence which belonged to his character, left no measure unattempted to raise a powerful opposition against a monarch, whose arms under Gaston de Foix and the Chevalier Bayard, were every where triumphant; and well aware that an invasion of France by Henry must operate as an immediate diversion, he exhausted all his policy to effect it: he at the same time succeeded in detaching the emperor and the Swiss from the league; and the result of these efforts was a coalition as formidable in every respect as that which had been arrayed so lately against the Venetians. Julius, who scrupled not to command his army in person, Ferdinand of Spain, Henry the Eighth, and the Swiss republics, determined to employ their whole strength in the expulsion of the French from the Italian states; and Lewis, aware of the ruin which might follow any attempt to divide the forces of his kingdom, found himself under the necessity of recalling his troops, and abandoning the possessions which had cost him so many battles.

These transactions were not seen by James with-

out emotion. Since the commencement of his reign, his alliance with France had been cordial and sincere. A lucrative commercial intercourse, and the most friendly ties between the sovereigns and the nobility of the two countries, had produced a mutual warmth of national attachment; the armies of France had repeatedly been commanded by Scotsmen; and, throughout the long course of her history, whenever Scotland had been menaced or attacked by England, she had calculated without disappointment upon the assistance of her ally. As to the wisdom of this policy upon the part of her sovereigns, it would now be idle to inquire; it being too apparent that, except where her independence as a nation was threatened, that kingdom had every thing to lose and nothing to gain by a war with the sister country. But these were not the days in which the folly of a war of territorial conquest was recognised by European monarchs; and the gallantry of the Scottish prince disposed him to enter with readiness into the quarrel of Lewis. We find him accordingly engaged in the most friendly correspondence with this sovereign, requesting permission, owing to the failure of the harvest, to import grain from France, and renewing his determination to maintain in the strictest manner, the ties of amity and support.

At this crisis an event happened which contributed in no small degree to fan the gathering flame of animosity against England. Protected by

their letters of reprisal, and preserving, as it would appear, a hereditary animosity against the Portuguese, the Bartons had fitted out some privateers which scoured the Western Ocean, took many prizes, and detained and searched the English merchantmen under the pretence that they had Portuguese goods on board. It is well known, that at this period, and even so late as the days of Drake and Cavendish, the line between piracy and legitimate warfare was not precisely defined, and there is reason to suspect that the Scottish merchants having found the vindication of their own wrongs and the nation's honor a profitable speculation, were disposed to push their retaliation to an extent so far beyond the individual losses they had suffered, that their hostilities became almost piratical. So, at least, it appeared to the English: and it is said that the Earl of Surrey, on hearing of some late excesses of the privateers, declared that "the narrow seas should not be so infested whilst he had an estate that could furnish a ship, or a son who was able to command it." He accordingly fitted out two men-of-war, which he entrusted to his son Sir Edward Howard, afterwards Lord High Admiral; and this officer having put to sea, had the fortune to fall in with Andrew Barton, in the Downs, as he was returning from a cruise on the coast of Portugal. The engagement which followed was obstinately contested: Barton commanded his own ship, the Lion: his other vessel was only an armed pinnace; but both fought

with determined valor till the Scottish Admiral was desperately wounded; it is said, that even then this bold and experienced seaman continued to encourage his men with his whistle,[1] till receiving a cannon shot in his body, it dropped from his hand, and he fell dead upon the deck. His ships were then boarded, and carried into the Thames; the crews, after a short imprisonment, being dismissed, but the vessels detained as lawful prizes. It was not to be expected that James should tamely brook this loss sustained by his navy, and the insult offered to his flag in a season of profound peace. Barton was a personal favorite, and one of his ablest officers; whilst the Lion, the vessel which had been taken, was only inferior in size to the "Great Harry," at that time the largest ship of war which belonged to England. Rothsay Herald was accordingly despatched on the instant, with a remonstrance and a demand for redress; but the king had now no longer to negociate with the cautious and pacific Henry the Seventh, and his impetuous successor returned no gentler answer than that the fate of pirates ought never to be a matter of dispute amongst princes.

It happened unfortunately that at this moment another cause of irritation existed: Sir Robert Ker, an officer of James's household, master of his

[1] Lesly, Bannat. Edition, pp. 82, 83. Pinkerton ii. 69. A gold whistle was, in England, the emblem of the office of High Admiral. Kent's Illustrious Seamen, vol. i. p. 519.

artillery, and warden of the middle marches, having excited the animosity of the borderers by what they deemed an excessive rigor, was attacked and slain by three Englishmen named Lilburn, Starked, and Heron. This happened in the time of Henry the Seventh, by whom Lilburn was delivered up to the Scots, whilst Starked and Heron made their escape; but such was the anxiety of the English king to banish every subject of complaint, that he arrested Heron, the brother of the murderer, and sent him in fetters to Scotland. After some years Lilburn died in prison, whilst Starked and his accomplice stole forth from their concealment; and trusting that all would be forgotten under the accession of a new monarch, began to walk more openly abroad. But Andrew Ker, the son of Sir Robert, was not thus to be cheated of his revenge: two of his vassals sought out Starked's residence during the night, although it was ninety miles from the border, and, breaking into the house, murdered him in cold blood; after which they sent his head to their master, who exposed it with all the ferocity of feudal exultation, in the most conspicuous part of the capital; a proceeding which appears to have been unchecked by James, whilst its summary and violent nature could hardly fail to excite the indignation of Henry. There were other sources of animosity in the assistance which the English monarch had afforded to the Duchess of Savoy

against the Duke of Gueldres, the relative and ally of his brother-in-law, in the audacity with which his cruisers had attacked and plundered a French vessel which ran in for protection to an anchorage off the coast of Ayr, and the manifest injustice with which he refused to deliver to his sister, the Queen of Scotland, a valuable legacy of jewels which had been left her by her father's will.

Such being the state of affairs between the two countries, an envoy appeared at the Scottish court with letters from the pope, whilst nearly about the same time arrived the ambassadors of England, France, and Spain. Henry, flattered by the adulation of Julius, who greeted him with the title of Head of the Italian League, had now openly declared war against France: and anxious to be safe on the side of Scotland, he condescended to express his regret, and to offer satisfaction for any violations of the peace. But James detected the object of this tardy proposal, and refused to accede to it. To the message of the king of France, he listened with affectionate deference, deprecated the injustice of the league which had been formed against him, and spoke with indignation of the conduct of England, regretting only the schism between Lewis and the See of Rome, which he declared himself anxious by every means to remove. Nor were these mere words of good will: he dispatched his uncle, the Duke of Albany, as ambassador to the emperor, to

intreat him to act as a mediator between the pope and the king of France, whilst the bishop of Murray proceeded on the same errand to that country,[1] and afterwards endeavoured to instil pacific feelings into the College of Cardinals, and the Marquis of Mantua.

To the proposals of the ambassador of Ferdinand, who laboured to engage him in the papal league against Lewis, it was answered by the king, that his only desire was, to maintain the peace of Christendom; and so earnest were his endeavours upon this subject, that he summoned a general council for the purpose of deliberating upon the likeliest methods of carrying his wishes into effect. To secure the co-operation of Denmark, Sir Andrew Brownhill was deputed to that court, and letters which strongly recommended the healing of all divisions, and the duty of forgiveness, were addressed to the warlike Julius. It was too late, however: hostilities between France and the Papal confederates had begun; and James, aware that his own kingdom would soon be involved in war, made every effort to meet the emergency with vigor. His levies were conducted on a great scale; and we learn from the contemporary letter of the English envoy then in Scotland, that the country rung with the din of preparation: armed musters were held in every part of the kingdom, not excepting the Isles, now an integral portion of the state: ships were

[1] Epist: R. S. i. 126—128.

launched — forests felled to complete those on the stocks—Borthwick, the master gunner, was employed in casting cannon; Urnebrig, a German, in the manufacture of gunpowder: the Great Michael was victualled and cleared out for sea: the castles in the interior dismantled of their guns, that they might be used in the fleet or the army: and the ablest sea officers and mariners collected in the various sea ports.[1] In the midst of these preparations the king visited every quarter in person—mingled with his sailors and artizans, and took so constant an interest in every thing connected with his fleet, that it began to be rumoured he meant to command it in person. Yet whilst such was the hostile activity exhibited throughout the country, negociations with England were continued, and both monarchs made mutual professions of their desire to maintain peace; Henry in all probability with sincerity, and James only to gain time. It was at this time that the Scottish queen gave birth to a prince in the palace of Linlithgow, on the 10th of April, 1512; who afterwards succeeded to the throne by the title of James the Fifth.[2]

Early in the year 1512, Lord Dacre and Dr. West arrived as ambassadors from England, and were received with a studied courtesy, which seemed only intended to blind them to the real designs of Scotland. Their object was to prevail on the king to renew his oath regarding the peace

[1] Treasurer's Accounts, 1511, 1512. [2] Lesly, p. 84.

with England; to prevent the sailing of the fleet to the assistance of the French; and to offer, upon the part of their master, his oath for the observation of an inviolable amity with his brother.[1] But the efforts of the English diplomatists were successfully counteracted by the abilities of the French ambassador, De la Motte: they departed, with splendid presents, indeed, for the king delighted in showing his generosity even to his enemies, but without any satisfactory answer; and James, instead of listening to Henry, renewed the league with France, consenting to the insertion of a clause which, in a spirit of foolish and romantic devotion, bound himself and his subjects to that kingdom by stricter ties than before.[2] About the same time an abortive attempt by the Scots to make themselves masters of Berwick, and an attack of a fleet of English merchantmen by De la Motte, who sunk three, and carried seven in triumph into Leith, virtually amounted to a declaration of war. Barton, too, Falconer, Mathison, and other veteran sea officers, received orders to be on the look-out for English ships; and, aware of the importance of a diversion on the side of Ireland, a league was entered into with O'Donnel, prince of Connal, who visited the Scottish court, and took the oath of homage to James: Duncan Campbell, one of the Highland chiefs, engaged at the same time to procure some Irish vessels to join his fleet—which it was

[1] Lesly, p. 85. [2] MS. Leagues, Harleian, 1244, pp. 115, 116.

now reckoned would amount to sixteen ships of war, besides smaller craft; a formidable armament for that period, and likely when united to the squadron of the king of France to prove, if skilfully commanded, an overmatch for the navy of England. Yet James's preparations with his other sources of profusion, had so completely impoverished his exchequer, that it became a question whether he would be able to maintain the force which he had fitted out. In a private message sent to Lord Dacre, the treasurer of Scotland appears to have stated that a present from Henry of five thousand angels, and the payment of the disputed legacy which, with much injustice, was still withheld, might produce a revolution in his policy;[1] and it is certain that, on the arrival of letters from Lewis, instigating Scotland to declare war, the reply of the monarch pleaded the impossibility of obeying the injunction unless a large annuity was remitted by France. The borderers, however, of both countries had already commenced hostilities; and Robert Barton, acting under his letters of reprisal, and scouring the narrow seas, came into Leith after a successful cruize, with thirteen English prizes.[2]

In their mutual professions of a desire for peace both governments appear to have been

[1] Letter, Lord Dacre to the Bishop of Durham, 17th of August. Caligula, B. III. 3, quoted by Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 78. Also Letter, John Ainslow to the Bishop of Durham, 11th of September. Cal. B. VI. 22.

[2] Lesly Bannat. Ed. p 85.

insincere: Henry had determined to signalize his arms by the reconquest of Guienne, and only wished to gain time for the embarkation of his army; James, shutting his eyes to the real interests of his kingdom, allowed a devotion to Lewis, and a too violent resentment for the insult offered to his fleet, to direct his policy. To concentrate his strength, however, required delay. Repeated messages passed between the two courts; the Scottish prince, by his ambassador Lord Drummond, even proceeded so far as to offer to Henry a gratuitous remission of all the late injuries sustained by his subjects, provided that monarch would abandon the confederacy against France;[1] and although the proposal was rejected, Dr. West again proceeded on an embassy to Scotland, of which his original letters have left us some interesting particulars. He found the king engrossed in warlike preparations, yet laboring under a strong fit of superstition, in which he projected an expedition to Jerusalem, animated equally by a romantic desire of signalising his prowess against the infidels, and a hope of expiating the guilt which he had incurred in appearing in arms against his father. He had been shut up for a week in the church of the Friars Observants at Stirling; but the effect of this religious retirement seems to have been the reverse of pacific. He expressed himself with the utmost bitterness against the late warlike Pontiff Julius the second,

[1] Rymer Fœdera, vol. xiii. p. 346.

then recently deceased; declaring that had he lived, he would have supported a council even of three bishops against him. He had resolved to send Forman, the bishop of Moray, and the chief author of the war against England, as ambassador to Leo the Tenth, the new Pope, and it was reported that Lewis had secured the services of this able and crafty politician by the promise of a cardinal's hat. To Henry's offers of redress for the infractions of the truce, provided the Scottish monarch would remain inactive during the campaign against France, he replied that he would not proceed to open hostilities against England, without previously sending a declaration by a herald; so that if the king fulfilled his intention of passing into France with his army, ample time should be allowed him to return for the defence of his kingdom. It was unequivocally intimated that peace with France was the only condition upon which an amicable correspondence could be maintained between the two kingdoms; and amongst minor subjects of complaint, Henry's continued refusal to send his sister's jewels was exposed in a spirited letter from that princess, which was delivered by Dr. West on his return.[1]

La Motte soon after again arrived from France with a small squadron laden with provisions for the Scottish fleet, besides warlike stores and rich presents to the king and his principal nobles.

[1] West to Henry, 1st April. Calig. B. VI. 56.

About the same time the king of Denmark sent several ships into Scotland freighted with arms, harness, and ammunition, and O'Donnel, the Irish potentate, visited the court in person to renew his offers of assistance against England. But an artful proceeding of Anne of Brittany, the consort of Lewis had, it was believed, a greater effect in accelerating the war than either the intrigues of the Bishop of Moray or the negociations of La Motte. This princess who understood the romantic weakness of the Scottish king, addressed to him an epistle conceived in a strain of high flown and amorous complaint. She described herself as an unhappy damsel, surrounded by danger, claimed his protection from the attacks of a treacherous monarch, and sent him, besides a present of fourteen thousand crowns, the still more tender gift of a ring from her own finger—a token to her faithful knight upon whose ready aid she implicitly relied. She concluded her letter by imploring him to advance were it but three steps into English ground for the sake of his mistress, as she had already suffered much misconstruction in defence of his honor, and in excusing the delay of his expedition.[1] To another monarch than James an appeal like this would have been only excusable at a court pageant or a tournament; but such was his high-wrought sense of honor that there can be little doubt it accelerated his warlike movements;

[1] Lindsay, 171. Pinkerton, ii. 87.

and when, soon after its delivery, intelligence arrived of the passage of the English army to France, and the opening of the war by Henry the Eighth in person, he at once considered all negociation as at an end, issued his writs for a general muster of the whole force of his dominions, and ordered every ship in his service to put to sea.

The fleet which assembled evinces that the efforts of the king to create a navy had been eminently successful. It consisted of thirteen great ships, all of them, in the naval phraseology of the times, with three tops, besides ten smaller vessels, and a ship of Lynne lately captured. In addition to these there was the Great Michael, a thirty-oared galley which belonged to her, and two ships the Margaret and the James, which, although damaged in a late gale, were now repaired and ready to put to sea. Aboard this fleet was embarked a force of three thousand men, under the command of the Earl of Arran, a nobleman of limited experience in the art of war; the admiral of the fleet was Gordon of Letterfury,[1] a son of the Earl of Huntly; but unfortunately Arran's higher feudal rank and his title of Generalissimo included an authority over the fleet as well as the army, and this circumstance drew after it disastrous consequences. Why James should not have appointed some of his veteran sea officers, Barton, Wood, or Falconer, to conduct a navy of which he was so proud to its destination in France, is not

[1] Lesly, p. 87.

easily discoverable, but it probably arose out of some hereditary feudal right which entailed upon rank a command due only to skill, and for which it soon appeared that the possessor was utterly incompetent.

Instead of obeying the orders which he had received from the king, who, with the object of encouraging his seamen, embarked in the Great Michael and remained on board till they had passed the May, Arran conducted the fleet to Carrickfergus, in Ireland, landed his troops, and stormed the town with much barbarity, sparing neither age nor sex.[1] The reckless brutality with which the city was given up to the unlicensed fury of the soldiery would at all times have been blamable, but at this moment it was committed during a time of peace, and against the express promise of the king; yet such was the folly or simplicity of the perpetrator, that with the spirit of a successful freebooter, he did not hesitate to put his ships about and return to Ayr with his plunder. Incensed to the utmost by such conduct, and dreading that his delay might totally frustrate the object of the expedition, James dispatched Sir Andrew Wood, to supersede Arran in the command; but misfortune still pursued his measures, and before this experienced seaman could reach the coast, the fleet had again sailed. Over the future history of an armament which was the boast of the sovereign, and whose equipment had cost the

[1] Pinkerton's Scottish Poems, vol. i. p. 150.

country an immense sum for those times, there rests a deep obscurity. That it reached France is certain, and it is equally clear that only a few ships ever returned to Scotland. Of its exploits nothing has been recorded—a strong presumptive proof that Arran's future conduct in no way redeemed the folly of his commencement. The war, indeed, between Henry and Lewis was so soon concluded that little time was given for naval enterprise, and the solitary engagement by which it was distinguished (the battle of Spurs) appears to have been fought before the Scottish forces could join the French army. With regard to the final fate of the squadron, the probability seems to be that, after the defeat at Flodden, part, including the Great Michael, were purchased by the French government; part arrived in a shattered and disabled state in Scotland; whilst others which had been fitted out by merchant adventurers, and were only commissioned by the government, pursued their private courses and are lost sight of in the public transactions of the times. But we must turn from these necessarily unsatisfying conjectures to the important and still more disastrous events which were passing in Scotland.

Although the war was condemned by the wisest heads amongst his council, and the people, with the exception of the borderers whose trade was plunder, deprecated the interruption of their pacific labours, so great was the popularity of the king, that from one end of the country to the other, his

summons for the assembling of his army was devotedly obeyed. The lowland counties collected in great strength, and from the Highlands and the remotest Isles, the hardy inhabitants hastened under their several chiefs to join the royal banner. The Earl of Argyle, Mac Ian of Ardnamurchan, Maclean of Dowart, and Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenurchy, with many other barons, led their clansmen and vassals to support the quarrel of their sovereign, and within a short period James saw himself at the head of an army, which at the lowest computation was a hundred thousand strong.

On the same day in which his fleet had sailed, a herald was dispatched to France, who found the English monarch in his camp before Terouen, and delivered a letter of which the tone was calculated to incense a milder monarch than Henry. It dwelt with some exaggeration upon the repeated injuries and insults which James had received from his brother-in-law. It accused him of refusing a safe conduct to his ambassador (a proceeding worthy only of an infidel power); it upbraided him with a want of common justice and affection in withholding from his sister, the Queen of Scotland, the jewels and the legacy which had been left her by her father;[1] it asserted that the conduct of England, in a late meeting of the commissioners of the two countries on the borders,

[1] Ellis's Letters, first series, vol. i. p. 64—Queen Margaret to Henry the Eighth.

had been deficient in honor and good faith; that Heron, the murderer of a Scottish baron, very dear to the king, was protected in that country; that Scottish subjects in a time of peace had been carried off in fetters across the border; that Andrew Barton had been slaughtered and his ships unjustly captured by Henry's Admiral; whilst that prince not only refused all redress, but showed the contempt with which he treated the demand by declaring war against James's relative, the Duke of Gueldres, and now invading the dominions of his friend and ally the King of France. Wherefore it concluded, "We require you to desist from farther hostilities against this most christian prince, certifying your highness that in case of refusal we shall hold ourselves bound to assist him by force of arms, and to compel you to abandon the pursuit of so unjust a war."[1]

On perusing this letter, Henry broke out into an expression of ungovernable rage, and demanded of the Scottish envoy whether he would carry a verbal answer to his master. "Sir," said the Lion Herald, "I am his natural subject, and what he commands me to say that may I boldly utter; but it is contrary to my allegiance to report the commands of others. May it please your highness, therefore, to send an answer in writing—albeit the matter requires deeds rather than words—since it

[1] These are not the exact words, but a paraphrase of the conclusion of the letter which exists in the British Museum. Caligula B. VI. 50. It has been printed by Holinshed, p. 135.

is the king my master's desire that you should straitway return home." "That shall I do (replied Henry) at mine own pleasure, and not at your sovereign's bidding," adding many injurious reflections upon the broken faith and treachery of the Scottish king; to which the herald replied as he had been instructed by a denunciation of war. It was thought proper, however, that a graver answer should be sent to James's remonstrance, and a letter was forthwith drawn up which in violence exceeded it, but as the herald was detained on his return in Flanders, and did not reach Scotland till after the fatal result of Flodden, it was never delivered to the king.[1]

The English monarch boasted, on being informed of James's resolution, that he had left the task of defending his dominions to a noble person who knew well how to execute it with fidelity, and he now addressed his orders to the Earl of Surrey, enjoining him with all expedition to summon the array of the northern counties, and to hold himself in readiness to resist the invasion. It was, indeed, high time to accelerate his levies, for Home the Lord Chamberlain, at the head of a force

[1] "We cannot greatly marvel (says Henry to James) considering the auncient accustumable manners of your progenitors whiche never kept longer faithe and promise than pleased them. * * And if the example of the King of Navarre being exclused from his realme for the assistance given to the French King cannot restrain you from this unnatural dealing, we suppose ye shall have the assistance of the said French King as the King of Navarre hath nowe, who is a king without a realme."—Holinshed, p. 139.

of eight thousand men had already burst across the English border, and after laying waste the country, was returning home with his booty. A long interval of peace, however, had been followed, as usual, by a decay of military skill amongst the Scots. The chamberlain neglecting his discipline, forgot to push on his piquets, but marching in a confused mass, embarrassed by the cattle which he drove before him, and thoughtless of an enemy, was surprised and defeated with great slaughter at a pass called the Broomhouse, by Sir William Bulmer. The action was, as usual, decided by the English archers, who, concealing themselves in the tall furze with which the place abounded, struck down the Scottish companies by an unexpected discharge of their arrows.[1] This being often repeated, the confusion of their ranks became irrecoverable, and the English horse breaking in upon them gained an easy victory. Five hundred were slain upon the spot, and their leader compelled to fly for his life, leaving his banner on the field, and his brother Sir George Home with four hundred men prisoners in the hands of the English. The remainder, consisting of borderers more solicitous for the preservation of their booty than their honor, dispersed upon the first alarm, and the whole affair was far from creditable to the Scots. So much was the king incensed and mortified by the result of this action that his mind, already resolved on war, became impatient to wipe

[1] Holinshed, Edn. 1808, p. 471. Hall, p. 556.

out the stain inflicted on the national honor, and he determined instantly to lead his army in person against England. It was a fatal resolve, and appeared full of rashness and danger to his wisest councillors, who did not scruple to advise him to protract hostilities. The queen earnestly besought him to spare her the unnatural spectacle of seeing her husband arrayed in mortal contest against her brother; and when open remonstrance produced no effect, other methods were employed to work upon the superstition which formed so marked a feature in the royal mind. At Linlithgow, a few days before he set out for his army, whilst attending vespers in the chapel adjacent to his palace, a venerable stranger of a stately appearance entered the cathedral; his head was uncovered, his hair parted over his forehead flowed down his shoulders, his robe was blue tied round his loins with a linen girdle, and there was an air of majesty about him, which inspired the beholders with awe. Nor was this feeling decreased when the unknown visitant walked up to the king, and leaning over the reading desk where he knelt, thus addressed him: "Sir, I am sent to warn thee not to proceed in thy present undertaking—for if thou dost, it shall not fare well either with thyself or those who go with thee. Further it hath been enjoined me to bid thee to shun the familiar society and counsels of women, lest they occasion thy disgrace and destruction." The boldness of these words,

which were pronounced audibly, seemed to excite the indignation neither of the king nor those around him. All were struck with superstitious dread, whilst the figure, using neither salutation nor reverence, retreated and vanished amongst the crowd. Whither he went, or how he disappeared no one, when the first feelings of astonishment had subsided, could tell, and although the strictest inquiry was made, all remained a mystery. Sir David Lindsay and Sir James Inglis, who belonged to the household of the young prince, stood close beside the king when the stranger appeared, and it was from Lindsay that Buchanan received the story.[1] The most probable conjecture seems to be, that it was a stratagem of the queen, of which it is likely the monarch had some suspicion, for it produced no change in his purpose, and the denunciation of the danger of female influence was disregarded.

On arriving at head-quarters, James was flattered with the evidence he had before him of the affectionate loyalty of his subjects. The war was unpopular with the nobles, yet such was the strength with which the lowland counties had mustered, and the readiness with which the remotest isles had sent their vassals, that he saw himself at the head of a noble army, admirably equipt, and furnished with a train of artillery superior to that which had been brought into the field by any former monarch of Scotland. Leaving

[1] Buchanan, xiii. 31. Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 96.

his capital, and apparently without having formed any definite plan of operations, the monarch entered England on the 22nd of August; encamping that night on the banks of the river Till, a tributary stream to the Tweed.[1] Here he seems to have remained inactive for two days; and, on the 24th, with the view of encouraging his army, he passed an Act, that the heirs of all who fell in the present campaign, should not be subject to the common feudal fines, but should be free from the burdens of "Ward," relief or marriage, without regard to age.[2] The proclamation is dated at Twiselhaugh; and from this place he moved down the side of the Tweed, and invested the Castle of Norham, which surrendered after a siege of a week. He then proceeded up the Tweed to Wark, of which he made himself master with equal ease; and advancing for a few miles, delayed some precious days before the towers of Etal and Ford — enterprises unworthy of his arms, and more befitting the raid of a border free-booter, than the efforts of a royal army. At Ford, which was stormed and rased,[3] Lady Heron, a beautiful and artful woman, the wife of Sir William Heron, who was still a prisoner in Scotland, became James's captive; and the king, ever the slave of beauty, is said to have resigned

[1] Lord Herbert's Life of Henry the Eighth, p. 18. Hall says the army amounted to a hundred thousand men.

[2] Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 278.

[3] Weber's Flodden Field, p. 186, 187.

himself to her influence, which she employed to retard his military operations. Time was thus given for the English army to assemble. Had Douglas or Randolph commanded the host, they would have scoured and laid waste the whole of the north of England within the period that the monarch had already wasted; but James's military experience did not go beyond the accomplishments of a tournament; and although aware, that his army was encamped in a barren country, where they must soon become distressed, he idled away his days, till the opportunity was past.

Whilst such was the course pursued by the king, the Earl of Surrey, concentrating the strength of the northern counties, soon raised an army of twenty-six thousand men; and marching through Durham, received there the sacred banner of St. Cuthbert. He was soon after joined by Lord Dacre, Sir William Bulmer, Sir Marmaduke Constable, and other northern barons; and on proceeding to Alnwick, was met by his son, Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Admiral of England, with a reinforcement of five thousand men.[1] On advancing with this united force, Surrey dispatched Roge Croix Herald to carry his challenge to the King of Scots, which was couched in the usual stately terms of feudal defiance. It reproached him with having broken his faith and league, which had

[1] Stowe says five thousand. Lord Herbert, one thousand, p. 18.

been solemnly pledged to the King of England, in thus invading his dominions,—and offered him battle on the succeeding Friday, if he would be content to remain so long in England and accept it. Lord Thomas Howard, added a message, informing the king, that as high admiral, and one who had borne a personal share in the action against Andrew Barton, he was now ready to justify the death of that pirate, for which purpose he would lead the vanguard, where his enemies, from whom he expected as little mercy as he meant to grant them, would be sure to find him. To this challenge, James instantly replied that "he desired nothing more earnestly than the encounter, and would abide the battle on the day appointed." As to the rude accusation of broken honor, which had been brought against him, he desired his herald to carry a broad denial of the statement. "Our bond and promise," he observed, "was to remain true to our royal brother, so long as he maintained his faith with us. This he was the first to break; we have desired redress, and have been denied it; we have warned him of our intended hostility, — a courtesy which he has refused to us; and this is our just quarrel, which, with the grace of God, we shall defend." These mutual messages passed on the 4th of September; and on the day appointed, Surrey advanced against the enemy. By this time, however, the distress for provisions, the incessant rains, and the obstinacy of the king in wasting upon his pleasures,

and his observation of the punctilios of chivalry, the hours which might have been spent in active warfare, had created dissatisfaction in the soldiers, many of whom deserted, with the booty they had already collected, so that in a short time the army was much diminished in numbers. To accept the challenge of his adversary, and permit him to appoint a day for the encounter, was contrary to the advice of his best councillors; and he might have recollected, that in circumstances almost similar, two great masters in war, Douglas and Randolph, had treated a parallel proposal of Edward the Third with a sarcastic refusal. He had the sagacity, however, to change his first encampment for a stronger position on the hill of Flodden, one of the last and lowest eminences which detach themselves from the range of the Cheviots; a ground skilfully chosen, inaccessible on both flanks, and defended in front by the river Till, a deep sluggish stream, which wound between the armies.

On advancing and reconnoitering the spot, Surrey, who despaired of being able to attack the Scots without exposing himself to the probability of defeat, again sent a herald, to request the king to descend from the eminence into the plain. He complained somewhat unreasonably, that James had "[1]putte himself into a ground more like a fortress or a camp, than any indifferent field for battle

[1] Letter of Surrey; published by Ellis, vol. i. p. 86, 87; dated at "Woolerhaugh, the 7th day of Sept., at five of the clock in the afternoon."

to be taxed;" and hoping to work on the chivalrous spirit of the monarch, hinted that "such conduct did not sound to his honor;" but James would not even admit the messenger into his presence. So far all had succeeded, and nothing was required on the part of the king but patience. He had chosen an impregnable position, had fulfilled his agreement by abiding the attack of the enemy; and such was the distress of Surrey's army in a wasted country, that to keep it longer together was impossible. He attempted, therefore, a decisive measure, which would have appeared desperate unless he had reckoned upon the carelessness and inexperience of his opponent. Passing the Till on the 8th of September, he proceeded along some rugged grounds on its east side to Barmoor Wood, about two miles distant from the Scottish position, where he encamped for the night. His march was concealed from the enemy by an eminence on the east of Ford; but the manœuvre being executed without observation or interruption, evinces a shameful negligence in the Scottish commanders. Early on the morning of the 9th, he marched from Barmoor Wood, in a north westerly direction; and then turning suddenly to the eastward, crossed the Till with his vanguard and artillery, which was commanded by Lord Howard, at Twisel Bridge, not far from the confluence of the Till and the Tweed,—whilst the rear division, under Surrey in person, passed the river at a ford, about a mile higher up. Whilst

these movements were taking place, with a slowness which afforded ample opportunity for a successful attack, the Scottish king remained unaccountably passive. His veteran officers remonstrated. They showed him, that if he advanced against Surrey, when the enemy were defiling over the bridge with their vanguard separated from the rear, there was every chance of destroying them in detail, and gaining an easy victory. The Earl of Angus, whose age and experience gave great weight to his advice, implored him either to assault the English, or to change his position by a retreat, ere it was too late; but his prudent counsel was only received by a cruel taunt,—"Angus," said the king, "if you are afraid, you may go home;" a reproach which the spirit of the old baron could not brook. Bursting into tears, he turned mournfully away, observing, that his former life might have spared him such a rebuke from the lips of his sovereign. "My age," said he, "renders my body of no service, and my counsel is despised; but I leave my two sons, and the vassals of Douglas in the field: may the result be glorious, and Angus's foreboding unfounded!" The army of Surrey was still marching across the bridge, when Borthwick, the master of the artillery, fell on his knees before the king, and earnestly solicited permission to bring his guns to bear upon the columns, which might be then done with the most destructive effect; but James commanded him to desist on peril of his head, declaring, that he would

meet his antagonist on equal terms in a plain field, and scorned to avail himself of such an advantage. The counsel of Huntly was equally ineffectual; the remonstrance of Lord Lindsay of the Byres, a rough warrior, was received by James with such vehement indignation, that he threatened on his return to hang him up at his own gate. Time ran on amidst these useless altercations, and the opportunity was soon irrecoverable. The last divisions of Surrey's force had disentangled themselves from the narrow bridge; the rear had passed the ford; and the Earl, marshalling his army with the leisure which his enemy allowed him, placed his entire line between James and his own country. He was thus enabled, by an easy and gradual ascent, which led to Flodden, to march upon the rear of the enemy; and without losing his advantage for a moment, he advanced against them in full array, his army being divided into two battles, and each battle having two wings.[1] On becoming aware of this, the king immediately set fire to the temporary huts and booths of his encampment, and descended the hill, with the object of occupying the eminence on which the village of Brankston is built. His army was divided into five battles, some of which had assumed the form of squares, some of wedges; and all were drawn up in line, about a bow-shot

[1] Original Document in State Paper Office, entitled "Articles of the Bataill, betwixt the Kyng of Scottis, and the Erle of Surrey, in Brankston Field, the 9th day of September."

distance from each other.[1] Their march was conducted in complete silence; and the clouds of smoke which arose from the burning camp, being driven in the face of the enemy, mutually concealed the armies; so that when the breeze freshened, and the misty curtain was withdrawn, the two hosts discovered that they were within a quarter of a mile of each other. The arrangement of both armies was simple. The van of the English, which consisted of ten thousand men, divided into a centre and two wings, was led by Lord Thomas Howard; the right wing being entrusted to his brother, Sir Edmund, and the left to Sir Marmaduke Constable. In the main centre of his host, Surrey himself commanded; the charge of the rear was given to Sir Edward Stanley, and a strong body of horse, under Lord Dacre, formed a reserve. Upon the part of the Scots, the Earls of Home and Huntly led the vaward or advance; the king, the centre, and the Earls of Lennox and Argyle, the rear; near which was the reserve, consisting of the flower of the Lothians, commanded by the Earl of Bothwell. The battle commenced at four in the afternoon by a furious charge of Huntly and Home upon the portion of the English vaward under Sir Edmund Howard; which, after some resistance, was thrown into confusion, and totally routed. Howard's banner was beaten down; and he

[1] Gazette of the Battle in the Herald's Office. Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 456.

himself escaped with difficulty, falling back on his brother, the admiral's division. That commander, dreading the consequences of the defeat, instantly dispatched a messenger to his father, Lord Surrey, intreating him to extend his line with all speed, and strengthen the van by drawing up a part of the centre on its left. The manœuvre was judicious, but it would have required too long a time to execute it; and at this critical moment, Lord Dacre galloped forward with his cavalry, to the support of the vaward.[1] Nothing could have been more timely than this assistance; he not only checked the career of the Scottish earls, but, being seconded by the intrepid attack of the admiral, drove back the division of Huntly with great slaughter, whilst Home's men, who were chiefly borderers, imagining they had already gained the victory, began to disperse and pillage. Dacre and the admiral then turned their attack against another portion of the Scottish vaward, led by the Earls of Crawford and Montrose, who met them with levelled spears, and resolutely withstood the charge. Whilst such was the state of things on the right, a desperate contest was carried on between James and the Earl of Surrey in the centre. In his ardour, however, the king forgot that the duties of a commander were distinct from the indiscriminate valor of a knight; he placed himself in the front of

[1] Letter of Lord Dacre in Pinkerton, vol ii. p. 460.

his lances and billmen, surrounded by his nobles, who, whilst they pitied the gallant weakness of such conduct, disdained to leave their sovereign unsupported.[1] The first consequence of this was so furious a charge upon the English centre, that its ranks were broken; and for a while the standard of the Earl of Surrey was in danger; but by this time, Lord Dacre and the admiral had been successful in defeating the division led by Crawford and Montrose; and wheeling towards the left, they turned their whole strength against the flank of the Scottish centre, which wavered under the shock, till the Earl of Bothwell came up with the reserve, and restored the day in this quarter. On the right, the divisions led by the Earls of Lennox and Argyle were composed chiefly of the Highlanders, and Islemen; the Campbells, Macleans, Macleods, and other hardy clans, who were dreadfully galled by the discharge of the English archers. Unable to reach the enemy with their broad swords and axes, which formed their only weapons, and at no time very amenable to discipline, their squadrons began to run fiercely forward, eager for closer fight and thoughtless of the fatal consequences of breaking their array.[2] It was to little purpose that La Motte and the French officers who were with him attempted by entreaties and blows to restrain them; they neither understood their language nor cared for their violence, but threw themselves sword in hand upon the English. They

[1] Hall, p. 562. [2] Buchanan, xiii. 38.

found, however, an enemy in Sir Edward Stanley whose coolness was not to be surprised in this manner. The squares of English pikemen stood to their ground; and although for a moment the shock of the mountaineers was terrible, its force once sustained became spent with its own violence, and nothing remained but a disorganization so complete that to recover their ranks was impossible. The consequence was a total rout of the right wing of the Scots, accompanied by a dreadful slaughter, in which, amid other brave men, the Earls of Lennox and Argyle were slain. Yet, notwithstanding this defeat on the right, the centre under the king still maintained an obstinate and dubious conflict with the Earl of Surrey. The determined personal valour of James, imprudent as it was, had the effect of rousing to a pitch of desperate courage the meanest of the private soldiers, and the ground becoming soft and slippery from blood, they pulled off their boots and shoes, and secured a firmer footing by fighting in their hose. No quarter was given on either side; and the combatants were disputing every inch of ground, when Stanley, without losing his time in pursuit of the highlanders, drew back his division and impetuously charged the rear of the Scottish centre. It was now late in the evening, and this movement was decisive. Pressed on the flank by Dacre and the Admiral — opposed in front by Surrey, and now attacked in the rear by Stanley, the king's battle fought with fearful odds against

it; yet James continued by his voice and his gestures to animate his soldiers, and the contest was still uncertain when he fell pierced with an arrow, and mortally wounded in the head by a bill, within a few paces from the English Earl, his antagonist. The death of their sovereign seemed only to animate the fury of the Scottish nobles, who threw themselves into a circle round the body and defended it till darkness separated the combatants. At this time Surrey was uncertain of the result of the battle, the remains of the enemy's centre still held the field, Home with his borderers hovered on the left, and the commander wisely allowed neither pursuit nor plunder, but drew off his men and kept a strict watch during the night. When the morning broke, the Scottish artillery were seen standing deserted on the side of the hill, their defenders had disappeared, and the earl ordered thanks to be given for a victory which was no longer doubtful. He then created forty knights on the field, and permitted Lord Dacre to follow the retreat; yet, even after all this, a body of the Scots appeared unbroken upon a hill, and were about to charge the Lord Admiral, when they were compelled to leave their position, by a discharge of the English ordnance.[1] The soldiers then ransacked the camp and seized the artillery which had been abandoned. It consisted of seventeen cannon

[1] Hall in Weber's Flodden Field, p. 364.

of various shapes and dimensions, amongst which were six guns admirable for their fabric and beauty, named by the late monarch the Six Sisters, which Surrey boasted were longer and larger than any in the arsenal of the King of England. The loss of the Scots in this fatal battle amounted to about ten thousand men.[1] Of these a great proportion were of high rank; the remainder being composed of the gentry, the farmers and landed yeomanry who disdained to fly when their sovereign and his nobles lay stretched in heaps around them. Amongst the slain were thirteen earls—Crawford, Montrose, Huntly, Lennox, Argyle, Errol, Athole, Morton, Casillis, Bothwell, Rothes, Caithness, and Glencairn, the king's natural son the archbishop of St. Andrew's, who had been educated abroad by Erasmus, the bishops of Caithness and the Isles, the Abbots of Inchaffray and Killwining, and the Dean of Glasgow. To these we must add fifteen lords and chiefs of clans: amongst whom were Sir Duncan Campbell of Glenurchy, Lauchlan Maclean of Dowart, Campbell of Lawers, and five peers' eldest sons, besides La Motte the French ambassador, and the secretary of the king. The names of the gentry who fell are too numerous for recapitulation, since there were few families of note in Scotland which did not lose one relative or another, whilst some

[1] Original Gazette of the battle preserved in the Heralds' Office, London. Apud Pinkerton, vol. ii. p. 456.

houses had to weep the death of all. It is from this cause that the sensations of sorrow and national lamentation occasioned by the defeat were peculiarly poignant and lasting; so that to this day few Scotsmen can hear the name of Flodden, without a shudder of gloomy regret. The body of James was found on the morrow amongst the thickest of the slain, and recognized by Lord Dacre, although much disfigured by wounds. It was carried to Berwick and ultimately interred at Richmond.[1] In Scotland, however, the affection of the people for their monarch led them to disbelieve the account of his death; it was well known that several of his nobles had worn in the battle a dress similar to the king's; and to this we may probably trace a report that James had been seen alive after his defeat. Many long and fondly believed that in completion of a religious vow, he had travelled to Jerusalem, and would return to claim the Crown.[2]

The causes which led to this defeat are of easy detection, and must be traced chiefly to the king himself. His obstinacy rendered him deaf to the advice of his officers, and his ignorance of war made his individual judgment the most dan-

[1] Weever's Funeral Monuments, p. 181.

[2] Hereford in his Annals, p. 22, mentions, "That when James's body was found, his neck was opened in the middle with a wide wound, his left hand, almost cut off in two places, did scarce hang to his arm, and the archers had shot him in many places of his body."

gerous guide. The days which he wasted in the siege of Norham and Etal, or squandered at Ford, gave his enemy time to concentrate his army, and, when the hosts were in sight of each other, he committed another error in permitting Surrey to dictate to him the terms on which they were to engage. A third blunder was the neglect of attacking the English in crossing the river, and his obstinacy in not employing his artillery, which might have broken and destroyed the enemy in detail, and rendered their defeat when in confusion comparatively easy. Last of all, James's thoughtlessness in the battle was as conspicuous as his want of judgment before it. When Surrey, mindful of his duty, kept himself as much as possible out of the deadly brunt of the conflict, and was able to watch its progress and to give each division his prompt assistance, the Scottish monarch acted the part of Richard or Amadis, more solicitous for the display of his individual bravery and prowess, than anxious for the defeat of the enemy. It was a gallant but a fatal weakness which cannot be sufficiently condemned; dearly expiated, indeed, by the death of the unfortunate prince himself, whose fate some may think ought to defend him from such severity of censure; but when we consider the flood of noble and of honest blood, which was poured out at Flodden, and the long train of national misfortunes which this disaster entailed upon the country, it

is right that the miseries of unnecessary warfare and the folly of a thirst for individual glory should be pointed out for the admonition of future ages.

The character of this monarch may be sufficiently understood by the history which has been given of his reign; and it is pleasing, in running over its most prominent features, to exchange censure for applause. His energy, firmness and indefatigable activity in the administration of justice, his zeal for the encouragement of the useful arts, his introduction of the machinery of law and justice into the northern districts and the dominions of the isles, his encouragement of the commerce and the agriculture of the country, his construction of a naval power, his provision for increasing the means of national defence by casting artillery, building forts, and opening by his fleet a communication with the remotest parts of his kingdom, were all worthy of high praise—whilst his kindness of heart and accessibility to the lowest classes of his subjects rendered him deservedly beloved. His weaknesses were a too anxious desire for popularity, an extravagant love of amusement, and a criminal profusion of expenditure upon pleasures which diminished his respectability in the eyes of his subjects, and injured them by the contagion of bad example. He was slain in the forty-second year of his age, leaving an only son, an infant, who succeeded him by the title of James

the Fifth. His natural children by various mothers of noble blood as well as of homely lineage were numerous, and some of them who have hitherto escaped the research of the antiquary may be traced in the records of the high treasurer.